

Applicants' claims are directed to a method of treating a chronic HCV infection to eradicate detectable HCV-RNA by (1) administering a combination of a specific high dose of a specific pegylated interferon – pegylated interferon-alfa-2b, and a specific ribavirin dosage range for a first time period specified to be 4-12 weeks, and (2) administering a combination of a specific range (and potentially lower dose) of the same specific pegylated interferon alfa 2b and a specific dosage of ribavirin for a specific second treatment period of 36 to 44 weeks.

Applicants continue to assert that neither Albrecht U.S. Patent anticipates or makes obvious the specific combination therapies for specific treatment periods.

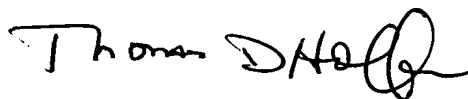
Applicants have also filed in an Amendment dated December 14, 2001 and received in the USPTO on January 11, 2002, a Terminal Disclaimer for Albrecht U.S. Patent No. 6,172,046 and a Terminal Disclaimer for U.S. Patent Appln. No. 09/311,487, now Albrecht U.S. Patent No. 6,472,373.

Applicants assert that the rejection of the claims 38-52 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over either Albrecht patent is improper in view of the two above-described Terminal Disclaimers. Copies of the two previously submitted Terminal Disclaimers are enclosed.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the grounds of rejection are earnestly solicited.

If Applicants can be of any assistance in advancing prosecution, please call the undersigned attorney of record.

Respectfully submitted,
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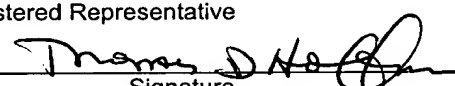
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

August 19, 2003

Thomas D. Hoffman

Registered Representative


Signature

8/19/2003
Date